

6.5 **SIGN REGULATIONS**

6.5.1 **Applicability**

The provisions of this section shall apply to the construction, erection, alteration, use, location, and maintenance of all signs located out-of-doors, or those signs affixed on any part of a building for the express purpose of being visible from the exterior of the building.

6.5.2 **Definitions**

Abandoned Sign: any temporary sign which applied to an event more than seven days prior; any permanent sign for which the owner cannot be found, or which no longer has application to the property on which it is located.

Accessory Sign: a sign which does not identify a business, service, product, or activity; i.e. Open, Closed, Vacancy, Hours of Operation etc.

A-Frame Sign: see “Sandwich Sign.”

Animated Sign: any sign which uses actual movement or the illusion of movement.

Area of a Sign: the area of a sign shall be calculated as the smallest rectangular area which completely encompasses all components of the sign, exclusive of its support(s); or the smallest circular area, whichever is greater. Area of sign having no significant third dimension and displaying information on two sides shall be considered as the area of a single side. Area of signs having a significant third dimension, as judged by the Sign Commissioner, and displaying information on two or more sides shall be calculated on a case-by-case basis.

Awning Sign: a sign attached to or printed upon the tile or fabric material supported by framing and which is attached to a building.

Banner: a flexible piece of cloth, plastic, or similar material, used for advertising attached at one or more points to a pole, staff, or other support.

Changeable-copy Sign: a sign that is designed so that characters, letters, plaques, or illustrations can be changed or rearranged without changing the design of the sign.

Commercial #1 Sign: any sign affixed to, suspended from, or incorporated as part of a building that directly or indirectly names, advertises, or calls attention to a business, product, service, or other commercial activity.

Commercial #2 Sign: any sign that directly or indirectly names, advertises, or calls attention to a business, product, service, or commercial activity and is not a Commercial #1 marquee, residential, political, real estate, professional announcements, lodging, boarding and tourist, temporary, or directional or identification sign.

Construction Sign: a temporary sign identifying an architect, builder, contractor, subcontractor, material supplier, or other participant in the construction, alteration, or maintenance, currently being done on the property on which the sign is located.

Direct/External Lighting: illumination by means of a light source that is external to the sign being lit.

Directional, Informational, or Safety Sign: an on-premises sign which identifies the premises, the activity, or the business conducted upon such premises or which provides directions for the safe and efficient flow of traffic. Such signs include those marking entrances, exits, parking areas, loading areas, or other operational features of the premises.

Door Sign or Window Sign: any sign or poster placed inside a window or door and legible from a public way (with characters that exceed two and one-half inches (2 ½”) in height).

Double-Faced Sign: a sign lettered on both sides.

Flashing Sign: a sign which is illuminated by an intermittent or sequenced light source.

Free-Standing Sign: a self-supporting sign not attached to any building, wall, or fence, but in a fixed location. This does not include portable or trailer-type signs.

Government Sign: any sign erected and maintained by the government.

Height of a Sign: the vertical distance measured from the highest point of a sign to the ground level beneath the sign.

Internal lighting (indirect lighting): illumination by means of light sources contained within the body of the sign.

Ladder Sign: a sign with two (2) or more crosspieces serving as individual signs.

Marquee Sign: a roof-like structure, canopy, or mobile unit bearing a signboard with or without a scrolling message.

Nonconforming Sign: a sign which was erected legally but which does not comply with subsequently enacted regulations.

Off Premises Sign: a sign identifying a business or residential use, facility, or service which is not located on the premises where such activity is located.

Political Sign: a temporary sign associated with the elective process.

Portable Sign: any sign not permanently attached to the ground or other permanent structure, or a sign designed to be transported, included but not limited to: signs designed to be transported by means of wheels; and signs converted to A- or T-frames; menu and sandwich board signs and balloons used as signs. Portable signs are temporary signs.

Projecting Sign: a sign which extends from a wall of a building.

Real Estate Sign: a temporary sign that advertises real property as being for sale, rent, or lease.

Residential Sign: signs for the identification of residential subdivision developments, townhouse developments, and multi-family developments; signs for institutional uses, including schools, churches, state and federal buildings, and utilities; and identification signs for farms, riding stables, and other agricultural or forestry uses.

Roof Sign: a sign which is located above, or projected above, the lowest point of the eaves or the top of the parapet wall of any building, or which is painted on or fastened to a roof.

Sandwich Sign: a self supporting, double paneled, temporary sign, with panels that are not parallel but are connected along one (1) edge and separated along the opposite edge. If connected on a vertical edge, it is a V-Shaped sign. If connected at the top, it is an A-frame sign.

Sign: any permanent or temporary structure, device, letter, word, model, banner, pennant, insignia, trade flag, or representation use as, or which is in the nature of an advertisement, announcement, or direction, or is designed to attract the eye by means including intermittent or repeated motion or illumination.

Sign Commissioner: the person appointed by and accountable to the appointing authority and responsible for the enforcement of this Bylaw, currently the Building Commissioner/Inspector of Buildings.

Special Event Sign: a temporary sign advertising or pertaining to a civic, patriotic, educational, or other event.

Subdivision Identification Sign: a sign identifying a subdivision, condominium complex, or residential development under construction.

Subdivision Lot Plan Sign: a sign depicting the lot plan of a subdivision.

Subsidiary Sign: a lesser sized sign attached to another sign.

Temporary Sign: any sign, including its support structure, intended to be maintained for a continuous period of not more than three (3) months in any calendar year and is not permanently mounted. This includes portable signs.

Wall Sign: any sign which is painted on , incorporated into, or affixed parallel to the wall of a building, and which extends not more than six (6) inches from the surface of that building.

6.5.3 **Permitted Signs**

Only signs which refer to a permitted use or an approved conditional use as set forth in Section III of the Ludlow bylaw are permitted, provided such signs conform to the provisions of this section.

6.5.4 **Prohibited Signs**

- a. Signs in excess of 100 square feet in area.
- b. Signs that constitute a hazard to pedestrian or vehicular traffic because of intensity or direction of illumination.
- c. Signs that incorporate, or are lighted by, flashing or blinking lights, or are designed to attract attention by a change in light intensity or by repeated motion. Signs indicating the current time and/or temperature are permitted provided they meet all other provisions of this bylaw.
- d. Any sign advertising or identifying a business or organization which is defunct or no longer located on the premises is not permitted.
- e. Portable signs are prohibited in the RA-1, RA, RB, A, or AMD districts.

6.5.5 **Placement Standards/Sign Height in All Districts**

- a. If affixed to, suspended from, or incorporated as part of a building, a sign cannot project more than twenty-four (24) inches over or into any building.
- b. If supported by or suspended from a pedestal, post or tree, a sign cannot project more than twenty-four (24) inches over or into any pedestrian or vehicular way customarily used by the public.
- c. No sign can project or extend more than six (6) feet above the eaves line or parapet of any building to which it is affixed.

- d. If free-standing, a sign cannot extend more than twelve (12) feet above ground level.

6.5.6 **Signs Allowed in Each Zoning District**

No sign shall be erected unless it is permitted by Table 4, Permitted Signs by Type and Zoning District:

Y - Yes Sign Permitted
N - No Sign Prohibited

6.5.7 **Non-Conforming and Temporary Signs**

- a. Signs legally existing at the time this bylaw is adopted may continue as non-conforming uses, and may be increased in size and height when approved by the Board of Appeals. (revised 4/10/95)

This provision shall not apply to billboards, signs and other advertising devices subject to the provisions of Sections 29 through 33, inclusive, of Chapter 93, and to Chapter 93D of the General Laws.

- b. A directional or identification sign may be erected and maintained in any district where the Board of Appeals, acting under Section 7.0 finds that such a sign will serve the public convenience, will not endanger the public safety, and will be of such size, location, and design as will not be detrimental to the neighborhood.
- c. Nothing herein shall affect provisions in existing bylaws relating to temporary signs permitted by the Selectmen, or posted by the Town or government.
- d. Temporary signs require a permit from the Building Inspector for up to three months.

6.5.8 **Permits**

- a. Any sign, over eighteen (18) inches by eighteen (18) inches shall require a permit from the Building Inspector/Commissioner.
- b. Applicants must provide a description of all existing signs on the premises as well as a scale drawing specifying dimensions, illumination materials and location on land or buildings for the proposed new sign(s).
- c. The Building Inspector shall issue a permit for a sign when an application therefore has been made and the sign complies with all applicable regulations of the Town and the State Building Code, Article 14.

**TABLE 4
PERMITTED SIGNS BY TYPE AND ZONING DISTRICT**

SIGN TYPE	STANDARDS & CONDITIONS	RA-1	RA	RB	BA	BB	A	AMD	IA	IB	IC
Residential (Amended 10-3-05)	No Commercial message allowed on sign, except under conditions in which the principal product or service is regularly produced or available on the premise and is a legally permitted activity. Size limited to 50 square feet and 8 feet in height.	Y	Y	Y	N	N	Y	Y	N	N	N
Political	Election and Message signs are permitted. Election signs shall be erected no earlier than 60 days prior to an election and must be removed 7 days after the election.	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Real Estate	Real Estate signs of not over 6 square feet in area advertising the sale or rental, only, of the premises on which they are located. No more than two (2) such signs shall be allowed per lot.	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Professional Announcement, Lodging, Boarding and Tourist	No display or other advertising device shall be visible from the street except an externally lit sign having an area of not more than 4 square feet. The number of signs is limited to one (1) for each family engaged	Y	Y	Y	N	N	Y	Y	N	N	N

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PERMITTED SIGNS BY TYPE AND ZONING DISTRICT**

SIGN TYPE	STANDARDS & CONDITIONS	RA-1	RA	RB	BA	BB	A	AMD	IA	IB	IC
Commercial #1 *See Below	Signs affixed to, suspended from, or incorporated as part of a building, provided the total area of the sign on a wall shall not exceed 10 percent of the area of the wall. No sign shall be painted directly on a wall	N	N	N	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y
Commercial #2 *See Below	One sign, not including Commercial #1, Marquee, Professional Announcement, lodging, boarding, Tourist, Political, Real Estate or Residential, for each 100 feet, or fraction thereof, of lot frontage on the principal street, provided that the total area of all such signs shall not exceed 100 S.F. for each such unit of frontage. No such sign shall be located nearer to the street line than the minimum setback distance required for a building on the same lot. In no case shall there be more than four (4) such signs in conjunction with a development or project. A development or project shall refer to a site which includes a lot or lots as a unit for development purposes where the lot or lots is occupied by more than one business whether in the same structure or not.	N	N	N	Y	Y	N	N	Y	Y	Y

